

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

A COFFIN IN EGYPT

So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Genesis 50:26

It is interesting that the book in the Bible that is titled Genesis, (which literally means, the "book of beginning" or "creation") ends with "a coffin in Egypt". A lot of events took place in this first Book between the record of GOD's creation of the world and Joseph's burial in a coffin in the dry sands of Egypt's desert. None of those events, however, has had any greater impact on natural men than the one which brought Joseph to this somber abode.

According to the LORD's eternal purpose HE created man upright (see Eccl.7:29) and placed HIM in a garden and instructed HIM to eat of all the trees of that Garden but one. HE then declared that this same man would die in the day that HE ate the fruit of this forbidden tree and exactly according to HIS purpose this is precisely what Adam did. Adam's action (a disregard of the LORD's commandment) brought upon him the exact consequences determined by the LORD for HIS disobedience. He died.

Now we know that he did not cease to breath nor did his heart stop beating, but rather the principle of death was introduced to him and he became a walking "dead man". He was cast out of the Garden wherein was access to the TREE of LIFE and banished. Well did Job prophesy when he said, "*Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.*" (Job 14:1-2)

Adam has passed this death on to all of his posterity. "*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*" (Rom 5:12) "*for the judgment was by one to condemnation,---by one man's offence death reigned by one---by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation--- by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.*" (Rom 5:16-19) So in this we see that Adam's unrighteousness is imputed to his sons, and his wicked nature is passed along to all of his offspring and brings death to all of those who have sprung from his loins. A man does not have to do one thing to bring himself into condemnation and its resultant sentence of death.

Physical and spiritual death is the result of this principle of sin which is in all of mankind by nature even as David confesses, "*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*" (Psa 51:5) and then declares, "*The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.*" (Psa 58:3) Paul testifies that "*the wages of sin is death.*" (Rom 6:23) Therefore dying men die without remedy because death is in their "DNA". As soon as a man is born he begins a slow or rapid (as GOD may determine according to HIS purpose) descent back to the dust from whence he was formed."

There are many lessons found in the burial of Joseph in Egypt:

Physical death is common to all men. Rich and poor, large and small, powerful and weak, are all alike in this matter. "*All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the*

wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.” (Eccl 9:2-3) “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” (Heb 9:27) Though Joseph was a ruler in Egypt, he was yet, the servant of death.

Death strips a man of all power and he is soon forgotten. Joseph was a man of some power and authority in Egypt as long as he lived but death took away any position which he held and a later king had no regard to his person or people. (see Ex. 1:6-14) The remembrance of a man will slowly fade from those who have loved him, but is quickly forgotten by the rank and file of the earth. Solomon said, “As he came forth of his mother’s womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.” (Ecc 5:15)

Even death cannot destroy the hope of those who are awakened and made righteous in JESUS CHRIST. This is due to the fact that they are given a hope which is not of this world. It does not have its substance in the things which can be handled and seen by the natural eye. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb 11:1) Joseph confessed that he was not a citizen of Egypt, since he gave commandment to the children of Israel to take his bones with them when they left. (see Gen.50:24,25) He believed that GOD would deliver them out of Egypt and went to HIS grave with this HOPE. “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.” (Heb 11:13-14)

As righteous as Moses and the law he administered was, he could not deliver Joseph from his coffin. All that Moses could do was to remove the bones from one grave in Egypt and bury them again in Canaan. “the law made nothing perfect” Many expect that they shall be given some regard in the Kingdom of heaven because they suppose they are keepers of the Law of Moses. Such men as these shall die in their sins being buried in a grave from which there is no escape.

The hope of the saints is not connected with any expectation of their own righteousness but in the complete deliverance of the ONE who is LIFE. “For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.” (Heb 7:19) While Joseph covenanted with the children of Israel to bring his bones out of Egypt, yet his confidence did not rest on their ability to carry this out but in the expectation and hope that GOD HIMSELF would visit the people of GOD and deliver them. Though Moses was impotent to free Joseph from the grave, the LORD JESUS CHRIST did indeed triumph over death and the grave, leading captivity captive and shall yet bring HIS people out of the graves where they sleep awaiting the day of the resurrection. “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” (1Thes 4:15-16)

The natural man is fit for nothing but a coffin in this earth. “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” (1Cor 15:50) The kingdom of GOD is not of this world nor can man in his natural state enter into it. “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1Cor 2:14) In order for a man to have either a TRUE HOPE or an entrance into this Kingdom, he must be born again. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” (1Pet 1:23)

The opening of the graves of the saints is a testimony to the resurrection power of JESUS CHRIST. HE shall cause the eternal life which has been bestowed on the sons of GOD to be clearly manifested as their natural bodies are transformed (changed) into those which are spiritual and incorruptible. “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. (1Cor 15:44) mam